

Case Study 1: **DIABETES**



Application

The Initial Interview Report can be seen as a “**SNAPSHOT**” of the client’s current situation. The counselor & other rehab team members can review it throughout the rehab process for easy, one-page reference. For example, you can attach it to your referrals for vocational services to quickly familiarize providers with the client’s situation. Likewise, it’s important that you, the writer, accurately *tell the client’s story*.

INITIAL INTERVIEW

Dan

01/02/05

Reason for Referral: Dan is a 25-year-old male who lives with Type 1 Diabetes (Juvenile Diabetes). His physician referred him to the agency for help seeking out a vocational direction within his disability related limitations.

Program Notifications: Prior to proceeding with the interview, Dan was provided information regarding the purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation, eligibility criteria, his rights, responsibilities, and remedies. He was provided with a written copy of such information for his personal reference.

Reported Disability: When asked to describe his disability, Dan reported he was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes at age 17. Dan was prescribed insulin to help him manage his disease. When asked, Dan stated he has not been faithful to his treatment regimen and is at risk of developing diabetic retinopathy and neuropathy if he is not careful. Dan has found the management of his disease to be complicated and frustrating. Dan’s adjustment to his disability appears to be poor; he perceives his diabetes to be very “*limiting*,” which, in turn, has resulted in what appears to be situational depression; Dan has difficulty envisioning an alternative vocational future and finds himself preoccupied with worry much of the time. When queried further, Dan revealed that he has difficulty getting restful sleep, has diminished appetite, and doesn’t look forward to recreational activities he used to enjoy.

Functional Limitations/Impediment to Employment: When asked how his disability limits his employment, Dan replied, “*My doc says I can’t work as a truck driver anymore. He said I should get a different job, which really disappoints me. I thought I’d retire from the company just like my dad did.*” Dan has worked as a truck driver for Hauler’s Transport since he graduated from high school seven years ago.

When asked to describe specific work related limitations resulting from his disability, Dan reported that his eyesight is getting worse and that he experiences numbness and slow-to-heal sores on both of his feet. Due to these complications, Dan is no longer able to pass the DOT physical and has been advised by his physician to seek out employment that offers regular hours and a steady workflow. (Driving and delivery for a moving company often involves irregular hours and prolonged periods of sitting followed by rigorous work to unload and deliver furniture. This schedule makes it more difficult for Dan to manage his blood sugars.)

Educational History: Dan graduated from high school and got his CDL via on-the-job training. He has no other formal education.

Work History: Dan has worked for Hauler’s Transport as a delivery driver for the past 7 years. He has no other work history.

Social and Financial Considerations: Dan lives alone in a rented apartment. He is close to his parents and grown siblings who live in the area. He says they are supportive of him and his choices. He states that his mom worries a lot about him and is always “hounding” him about watching how much sugar he eats. As he currently remains employed, Dan is able to provide for his expenses. Despite his doctor’s advice, Dan remains employed as a driver so that he can pay his bills. He refuses to ask his family for assistance stating, “*It wouldn’t be right. I’m an adult and they have their own stuff to worry about.*”

Client’s Reported Vocational Interests and Goals: When asked to describe his vocational aspirations, Dan replied, “*I don’t know. I can’t think of another job. I like the one I have.*” According to Dan, Hauler’s treated



So, just what is “neuropathy & diabetic retinopathy?” How do these conditions come about and how are they treated? Information is key for clients and counselors!

Use your resources:
<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/vocrehab/vrs/disabilityresourcecenter.shtml>




A skilled counselor will effectively solicit information from clients through open-ended questions and then reflect the “client’s voice” in case notes with direct quotes.

him well; they gave him extra responsibility, and intimated that Dan, who worked hard for them, had a future with their company.

Counselor Observations and Actions: Dan was casually dressed and well groomed. He presented himself in a friendly manner. He exchanged pleasantries with ease and was observed to maintain eye contact and smile throughout the interview. However, he also appeared anxious; he often wrung his hands as he talked about his concerns. A signed release for medical information was obtained and will be forwarded to Dan’s physician. Once received, Dan’s medical information will be reviewed to determine eligibility.

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor



Eligibility Determination

The VR counselor determines eligibility by always asking a series of **KEY QUESTIONS**:

1. Is there evidence of a physical or mental disability?
2. Does the disability prove to be an impediment to employment? In other words, does the disability interfere with the individual’s ability to prepare for, secure, and maintain suitable employment?
3. Does the individual *require* services to prepare for, secure, and maintain employment?

The Certificate of Eligibility is documented proof that the questions have been asked and answered.

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

Dan
02/14/05


Dan has a substantial impediment to employment in that the functional limitations resulting from his disability significantly interfere with his ability to continue in his work as an over the road truck driver. Specifically, the irregular hours and unsteady workflow prohibit Dan’s ability to effectively manage his blood sugar levels, which put him at risk of developing serious health complications: loss of eyesight and/or amputation. His physician has advised him to seek out alternative employment.

Dan requires vocational rehabilitation services. Services will include one or more of the following:

1. **Vocational Evaluation** geared to help Dan identify a vocational goal equal to his interests, abilities, and limitations.
2. **Nutrition Consultation** with a Registered Dietician to help Dan plan a diet that will help him manage his blood sugar.
3. **Adjustment Counseling** to help Dan accept his disability and embrace his possibilities.
4. **Direct job placement and/or on-the-job training.**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

NOTE: A letter of eligibility was forwarded to Dan on this date.



Certification reflects evidence that:

- ❑ The eligibility determination occurred within 60 days of application date.
- ❑ A physical or mental impairment proves to be substantial impediment to employment.
- ❑ At least one substantive service is required to overcome impediment to employment.



Assessment & Planning

In this phase, we help clients engage in exploration to help them discover their **DESTINATION** (vocational goal) and/or the **PROVISIONS** (services and supplies) they *require* to get there.

CASE NOTE

DUNBAR, Daniel
February 28, 2005

Dan was in today as scheduled to begin the development of his rehab plan. Dan remains uncertain regarding his vocational future. Given his satisfaction with his former job, this counselor asked Dan if he might consider a parallel profession such as working as a dispatcher for the company. Dan, who has little computer experience has reservations, but has agreed to mull over the possibility. To help him look at all his options, this counselor suggested Dan consider a full vocational evaluation. After hearing information regarding the evaluation's purpose, procedures, and benefits, Dan elected to undergo an evaluation.

A referral packet including a signed release of information and an authorization was completed.

Vocational Evaluation Date: **March 1, 2005**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

VOCATIONAL EVALUATION STAFFING SUMMARY

Date: March 4, 2005

Dan, the vocational evaluator, and this counselor met today to review the results and recommendations of Dan's vocational evaluation. (Full report enclosed in file.) In summary, Dan demonstrated a strong interest in working with computers and helping people. Furthermore, he demonstrated strong administrative/clerical skills; he was able to accurately record phone messages, file documents, order parts, and employ problem solving skills. Given these strengths, Dan is now more interested in working as a dispatcher for a trucking firm. To do so he will require training in computer fundamentals, keyboarding, and on-the-job training to learn the skills of a dispatcher. Ideally, Dan would like to receive his training at Hauler's. Prior to our next appointment, this counselor will contact Hauler's to determine if they have need for a dispatcher and whether or not an OJT for Dan is possible. If not, counselor will employ the assistance of a vocational specialist to identify other possible employers of dispatchers.

Next Review Appointment: **March 18, 2005**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

CASE NOTE

DUNBAR, Dan
March 7, 2005

This counselor spoke with Tim (Personnel Director at Hauler's Transport) regarding possible OJT for a dispatch position for Dan. Unfortunately, they do not have an opening at this time. They will, however, give Dan an "excellent" reference. Counselor then spoke with Deb (Employment Specialist) who indicated that We Move 'Em was advertising for a dispatcher. With counselor authorization, Deb contacted We Move 'Em who agreed to interview Dan. They liked Dan, but have hired somebody else at this time. They will consider Dan for future employment. Likewise, it appears the employment outlook for dispatcher is good.



What are the resources for Vocational Evaluations in your area? What's the referral process?



Managing essential information for many clients is a challenge! One way to draw attention to essential information is to use **highlighting** in your case notes. Notice how Clyde highlights the date of the next appointment at the end of all case notes. With a quick glance he knows when he'll next meet with the client and so will his supervisor who may be reviewing the case or standing in for him in his absence.



Potential Hazard Ahead! Discouragement can be common in the assessment phase. Here, it's the counselor's role to provide encouragement to help the client stay focused and on the road!

Dan is discouraged, but remains interested in becoming a dispatcher. Therefore, Dan and this counselor will meet on **March 14, 2005 at 9 AM** to complete on IPE.

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

RATIONALE FOR GOAL AND SERVICES

DUNBAR, Dan
March 18, 2005

Dan and this counselor met today as scheduled. Dan has chosen dispatcher as his vocational goal. Given his expressed interest, his demonstrated abilities (see Voc Eval), a good employment outlook for dispatches in this area, and Dan's physical limitations, it appears he has selected a suitable vocational goal.

To achieve his goal Dan, who has no other resources and who meets the financial need standard of this agency (see enclosed Financial Summary), will require training in computer fundamentals and keyboarding, on-the-job training, and adjustment and nutrition counseling. Dan was provided information (brochures, etc.) about local computer training, employment specialists, counselors and nutritionists. After reviewing the information, Dan has elected to do his computer training at the Adult Learning Center. He has chosen to work with Deb Getjobb, Ned Nutrition, and Constance Counselor for job placement assistance and nutrition and adjustment counseling, respectively.

An IPE outlining the above noted services was completed on this date and referrals including releases and authorizations were completed.

First 60-day Review Appt: **May 18, 2005 at 10 AM**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor



The Rationale document demonstrates that the counselor has considered the feasibility of the IPE strategy to overcome impediments. It provides evidence that...

- ❑ the client's goal is compatible with his expressed interests, concerns, priorities, demonstrated strengths, abilities, and that...
- ❑ the client *requires* the identified services to achieve his goal, and that...
- ❑ the client was provided information enabling him to make an "informed choice" regarding the services and the vendors identified on the IPE



IPE Initiation & Follow Along

The IPE is the **ROAD MAP** to the client's goal or destination. It outlines the route (what the client and the VR program will do to the client achieve his goal) and the ETA (estimated time of arrival or goal end date). Clients and counselors can avoid getting lost with frequent referral to the map!

INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT

Name: Dan Dunbar

Plan Date: 03/18/05

My work goal: Dispatcher

Date to complete goal: 03/18/06

We have agreed the following services are required:

Service(s)	Responsible Party	Amount	Provider(s)	Dates of	Service(s)
Computer & Keyboarding Class	Voc Rehab	\$200	Adult Ed		03/05-05/05
Adjustment Counseling	Voc Rehab	\$500	Connie Counselor		03/05-05/05
Nutrition Consultation	Voc Rehab	\$150	Ned Nutrition		03/05-05/05
Job Placement Assistance	Voc Rehab	\$1000	Deb Getjobb		05/05-03/06

Additional community and financial resources I will use to help me achieve my work goal:

I receive assistance with my diabetic supplies from my parents and job placement assistance from the local job service. Dan does not have insurance.

My responsibilities in showing progress toward my work goal:

- 1. I will complete Computer Fundamentals and Keyboarding classes with a passing grade by 05/18/05.*
- 2. I will attend all scheduled counseling sessions and will follow through with all agreed upon therapeutic activities to increase my coping skills and reduce my depression by 05/05/05.*
- 3. I will attend my nutrition consultation and will follow through with all agreed upon activities to get my blood sugars to a consistently healthy level:*
- 4. I will meet with my job placement specialist as scheduled, and will follow through with all agreed upon activities until I'm successfully employed.*

I understand that my failure to comply with these responsibilities will result in interruption of services, alternative planning, or case closure.

Schedule for Reviewing Progress: My placement specialist and I will meet with Clyde once every 60 days to review my progress until I'm successfully employed. Once employed, I understand that my case will remain open for 90 days to ensure my job satisfaction and success. Our first review appointment: **MAY 18, 2005 AT 10 AM**



An IPE that is accountable to the Rehab Act provides evidence that...

- ☐ All services are prior authorized and provided within the timeframe specified by the service start dates and the goal end date...
- ☐ Comparable benefits and resources are explored...
- ☐ Client responsibilities (objectives) are written in clear and measurable terms...
- ☐ Progress Review Schedule is clear, adherence to which will be reflected in subsequent Case Notes...

INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT

-Page 2-

VR Counselor Considerations:

1. Are Post Employment Services needed? YES ☐ NO ☒

2. Are Extended Employment Services needed? YES ☐ NO ☒

If Extended Employment Services are needed, please describe the required services and identify the extended services provider.

3. Have VR goals, objectives and services been coordinated with the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)? YES ☐ NO ☐ NA ☒

Methods for providing or procuring goods and services: The Vocational Rehabilitation program can provide vocational services directly. In addition, the agency can use purchase orders to procure goods and services from approved vendors. The bidding process is used when appropriate to purchase goods at the best available price. Comparable benefits, when available (resources from other programs or agencies), are utilized to meet rehabilitation needs. All services are provided in accordance with the Financial Need Standard specified by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

My comments about this plan:

"I chose dispatcher as my vocational goal because I like working in the trucking industry and because it's a job that I can do and still say healthy."

Client

Understanding:

By signing this document I understand and commit to the responsibilities in my Plan. I have been given the opportunity to make informed choices about my work goal, the vocational services needed to achieve it, providers of the goods and services, and the methods available for procuring the services. I received a copy of this Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in a format that was understandable and appropriate for me.

If applicable, I was offered the opportunity to assign my **Ticket to Work** to Vocational Rehabilitation. YES ☒ NO ☐

Client: Daniel Dunbar

Date: 03/18/05

Counselor: Clyde Caring

Date: 03/18/05

- ☐ the client was informed of the availability of Post Employment Services ...
- ☐ Extended Employment Services, if applicable, were addressed ...
- ☐ When applicable, VR coordinated services with school personnel to assist students who are transitioning from school to work & that there was opportunity to complete an IPE before graduation...
- ☐ The client was involved in the development of the IPE (see "My comments..") and that...
- ☐ The IPE was developed within 120 days of date of application, or the case record justifies an extension of plan development time.

PROGRESS REVIEW

DUNBAR, Dan

05/18/05

Dan was in today as scheduled. He successfully completed his computer classes and provided copies of his Certificates of Completion to be enclosed in his file (see enclosed.) Dan is now more comfortable with computers and their operating systems. He is also working to increase his typing speed.

Dan has been meeting with his counselor once per week. He states "*I'm beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel.*" When asked to elaborate, Dan indicated that he's not so worried about his future and that he's enjoying learning new things. He's sleeping better and is looking forward to a weekend camping trip with his family.

Dan also met with Ned the nutritionist. Dan admits that it's been a difficult adjustment for him to learn to watch his diet. However, he states he is feeling better and that the sores on the bottom of his feet are beginning to heal. He finds the improvement rewarding and feels more compelled to keep going in a healthy direction.

Now that he's completed his classes and has improved confidence and health, Dan is ready to pursue employment. Counselor asked him to make an appointment with Deb Getjobb.

Next Review Appointment: **July 18, 2005 at 11 AM**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

CASE NOTE

DUNBAR, Dan

June 10, 2005

Deb Getjobb called today to report that Hauler's contacted her about a dispatch job for Dan. Apparently one of their dispatchers is relocating. She contacted Dan who will meet the manager some time later this week. Deb and/or Dan will keep this counselor posted.

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

CASE NOTE

June 13, 2005

Status: **EMPLOYED**

Prior to his interview, Dan phoned this counselor. I encouraged Dan to disclose information about his disability to his employer, and to educate him about the kind of work schedule he needs to effectively manage his diabetes, stay healthy, and *work optimally*. I reminded Dan that his employer cannot accommodate Dan's needs if he doesn't know what they are.

Dan phoned later today to inform me that he has been hired back at Hauler's as their new dispatcher. Regarding the opportunity he states, "*I'm back in the saddle!*" He will work 40 hours a week, 9 to 6 with an hour lunch break and two mid shift breaks, which will allow ample time for Dan to eat and check his sugar levels. Although he was nervous about disclosing information about his disability, he went ahead and found the experience to be rewarding. He states, "*He listened, thanked me for sharing, and then helped me outline my schedule.*" **Dan's first day of employment: Monday, June 13** He admits to being apprehensive about learning the job, but is comforted by the fact that he already knows many of the people he'll be working with.

Next appointment: **July 18 at 1 PM** as previously scheduled with a time adjustment to accommodate Dan's new work schedule.

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC



As noted in the Progress Review Schedule of the IPE, Dan and Clyde meet today as planned.

Clyde automatically turns to the MAP (IPE) to see if they are moving along as planned. Specifically, he reviews the measurable objectives noted in the Client Responsibility section of Dan's IPE. He can see that Dan successfully completed his classes as scheduled. Also, Clyde can see that Dan is attending sessions with his counselor and nutritionist as is evidenced by his improved physical & mental health.

Throughout the rehab process, Clyde continues to italicize Dan's quotes as visual evidence of Dan's voice, and he continues to use bold face type to highlight the date of their next appointment for quick and easy reference.



One of the greatest skills a counselor can teach her client is how to communicate about one's disability *and the encouragement to do so.*

Effective self-advocacy is a skill that must be developed in order to achieve positive self-regard & independence.

PROGRESS REVIEW

DUNBAR, Dan
07/18/05

Dan and Deb were in today as scheduled. Dan is enjoying his job as a dispatcher. He states, *"There's a lot to learn, but I am enjoying it. Since I've been on the road as a driver, I know how to talk with the truckers, and that helps a lot. I've been there!"*

Deb, who has been in contact with Dan's employer, says that the supervisor is very happy with Dan's performance. They appreciate Dan's experience and say that it's helping him to learn the job quicker than most.

When asked, Dan reports that he continues to watch his diet and that he is also incorporating an exercise program at a local fitness club in order to build moderate activity into his schedule.

We are scheduled to meet again in September on Dan's 90th day of employment. If all goes well, we agreed to review his case for closure. In the interim, Deb will stay in touch with Dan and his employer.

Next Appointment: **September 13, 2005 at 1 PM**

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor



Remember, it's not enough to say that a client is "enjoying" his job. A counselor must substantiate that claim with a description of her observations. Again, that can be achieved through the use of client quotes or an actual description of client behavior.



Rehabilitation Outcome

In a successful case closure (26), the client's achievement of her goal and VR's contributions to that accomplishment are documented. In this case, a congratulatory handshake is in order! Sometimes, however, despite our best efforts, successful outcomes don't always occur. Sometimes clients relocate & other times life circumstances interfere. Either way, a respectful and courteous exchange between client & counselor, wherein the client knows she is welcome to reapply, is always desirable.

CLOSURE SUMMARY

09/13/05

Due to a busy day at work, Dan was unable to physically meet with Deb and this counselor. He was, however, able to chat with us via speakerphone from his office. Dan remains employed and continues to report satisfaction with his job. He states, *"I'm still here and I'm still liking it!"* When asked, Dan reports that his hours remain regular, but that he is helping out today for a co-worker who is home sick.

Dan has completed his probationary period at work and was given a raise. He is now making \$11/hour. According the state Department of Labor and Industry, Dan's wage is considered commensurate with others performing the same work in this locale. Given his success, we agreed to close Dan's case. Dan was provided information about Post Employment Services and welcomed to call should he need us.

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor

CLOSURE LETTER

Dan
123 Any Street
Anytown, USA

September 13, 2005

Dear Dan:

I enjoyed meeting with you today. Once again, congratulations on your new job at Hauler's! I'm delighted that you're doing a job that you enjoy. Also, given the feedback from your employer, it is evident that you remain to be an asset for the company. Through your own diligent efforts and the services provided you by Vocational Rehabilitation, you have successfully prepared for, secured, and maintained your job for 90 days. Therefore, as we discussed today, it appears you are in need of no further VR services and your case will be closed. However, should you experience any difficulties related to your disability and continued employment, please feel free to contact VR for assistance. As we discussed, assistance may be available through the Post Employment Services Program.

Dan, I wish you continued success and good health!

Sincerely,

Clyde Caring

Clyde Caring, MS, CRC
Rehabilitation Counselor



Case documents such as a [Closure Summary](#) and/or the [Closure Letter](#) must provide evidence that...

- ☐ The client achieved the goal outlined in the IPE and that the goal remains suitable...
- ☐ the client expressed satisfaction with the job in a direct consultation and the client and the counselor are in agreement with case closure...
- ☐ services made a substantive contribution to the achievement of the goal...
- ☐ the client has maintained the job for at least 90 days...
- ☐ the client is earning a customary wage, at or above minimum wage, and that...
- ☐ the client has been informed of Post Employment services.